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Agenda item 2

Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
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High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

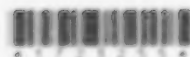
Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The present note provides information on the status of the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, including on its critical financial situation.

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I. Introduction

A. Submission of the report

1. The present note was prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/156, in which the Assembly encouraged contributions to the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Human Rights Council on the operations of the Special Fund. The present report covers the activities of the Special Fund between 1 January and 1 December 2017.

B. Mandate of the Special Fund

2. The Special Fund was established pursuant to article 26 of the Optional Protocol to help finance the implementation of the recommendations made by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment following a visit to a State party to the Optional Protocol, and to finance education programmes of national preventive mechanisms.

3. The Special Fund receives voluntary earmarked contributions from Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities.

C. Management of the Special Fund

4. The Special Fund is administered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

D. Eligibility criteria

5. Applications may be submitted by State institutions of States parties to the Optional Protocol and by their national preventive mechanisms, that the Subcommittee has visited and that have agreed to publication of the Subcommittee report. Applications may also be submitted by national human rights institutions compliant with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) or non-governmental organizations, if the proposed projects are to be implemented in cooperation with eligible States parties and/or national preventive mechanisms. Only applications relating to recommendations on the establishment or effective functioning of national preventive mechanisms contained in visit reports of the Subcommittee that have been published in accordance with article 16 (2) of the Optional Protocol, which are hence no longer confidential, may be considered.

II. Activities of the Special Fund

A. 2018 project cycle

6. The sixth call for applications to the Special Fund, for grants for projects to be implemented in 2018, closed on 1 March 2017. Projects concerning 21 eligible States and their national preventive mechanisms (Argentina, Armenia, Benin, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Gabon, Germany, Honduras, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, Sweden and Ukraine) and one eligible national preventive mechanism (Senegal) could be submitted. Applicants could request grants of up to \$25,000 for project activities to be implemented between 1 January and 31 December 2018.

7. A total of 37 applications were received, concerning 12 eligible States (Argentina, Armenia, Benin, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, and Senegal). In accordance with the guidelines for applications, the secretariat of the Special Fund conducted an extensive evaluation of the project proposals received within the deadline, in consultation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) field and regional offices and with the country rapporteurs of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. The Subcommittee's working group on the Special Fund and on capacity-building reviewed the substantive part of the project proposals and recommended 11 projects for grants, during its session in June. Following review by the OHCHR Grants Committee, 11 grants were awarded to projects aimed at implementing Subcommittee recommendations focusing on the establishment or strengthening of national preventive mechanisms in nine eligible States (Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, and Senegal), for a total of \$273,096.00 (see annex).

8. Since its first call for applications for projects to be implemented in 2012, the Fund has supported a variety of technical cooperation projects in 13 countries worldwide. These projects have resulted in legislative changes — such as bringing countries' laws into accordance with international human rights standards on torture prevention (including the revision of codes of criminal procedure, prison acts, and laws prohibiting abusive body search for persons deprived of their liberty), as well as laws seeking to establish national preventive mechanisms on torture; institutional changes — such as establishing or strengthening the effective functioning of national preventive mechanisms on torture or other relevant institutions, and establishing registers of detainees and so on; operational changes — due to enhanced knowledge and skills of the judiciary and of law enforcement and medical personnel; and changes in people's lives — including, in one case, a reported decrease of violence against children in detention facilities. The projects also contributed to increased awareness by persons deprived of their liberty of their rights, through the development and dissemination of manuals. Through its projects, the Fund has engaged with more than 2,000 people and national entities, including national preventive mechanisms, ministries of the interior and justice, ombudsman institutions, hospitals, prisons, the police and civil society actors.¹

9. The projects have addressed real gaps and needs in torture prevention, identified by the Subcommittee on the ground, and have been instrumental in implementing the Subcommittee's recommendations. The Special Fund is unique in linking the recommendations of an independent treaty-based expert committee with work on the ground, and an opportunity to apply for a Special Fund grant can serve as an incentive for publication of the Subcommittee's visit reports.

B. Other activities of the Fund

10. Given the Fund's focus on establishing and strengthening national preventive mechanisms, and in response to increasing demand from the field, OHCHR has developed the OHCHR practical guide on national preventive mechanisms on torture prevention, which will be published at the beginning of 2018. The guide was prepared in close collaboration with Subcommittee experts and OHCHR field officers experienced in supporting the establishment of national preventive mechanisms or assisting in strengthening them on the ground. It also reflects good practices for projects supported by Special Fund grants. The guide is intended to assist the authorities of States that are planning to establish or are seeking to strengthen their national preventive mechanism, as well as the staff of national preventive mechanisms themselves. It is expected also to be a useful tool for experts and professionals involved in preventing and combating torture, for civil society organizations and for the general public.

¹ Information from the final reports on projects' implementation submitted to the Special Fund secretariat by the grantees.

11. In regard to promotion and fundraising, a reception was hosted by the Permanent Mission of Czechia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, on 14 November 2017, to promote the Special Fund. The Chairs of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and of the Committee against Torture, and representatives of OHCHR, updated Member States on the outcomes of the projects supported by the Special Fund, highlighting their real impact on torture prevention on the ground. They encouraged further contributions, in order to enable the Special Fund to carry out its unique and very important work.

III. Financial situation of the Special Fund

12. The Special Fund is the only functional fund established by an international human rights treaty. Since its creation in 2012, the Fund has supported a total of 36 projects, for a total amount of \$1,258,400, in 13 States across four regions.

13. Fund activities should be commensurate with the growth of the activities of the Subcommittee, which have resulted in an expanding number of States eligible for the Fund: in 2015 there were 13 eligible States, and by the end of 2017 there were 22. This trend is expected to continue while countries are encouraged to ratify the Optional Protocol and to accept publication of the Subcommittee's visit reports.

14. The minimum amount required on an annual basis to guarantee the functioning of the Special Fund would be some \$500,000, which would enable the Fund to support an average of 10 to 20 projects per year, with a reasonable level of funding per project (e.g. \$25,000). However, the Fund did not receive sufficient financial contributions during 2017; only two contributions totalling \$50,437.70 were received, and one pledge of \$139,040.

Contributions to the Special Fund (1 January–31 December 2016)

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
Argentina	\$10 000	4 March 2016
Spain	\$38 846	29 November 2016
Czechia	\$7 849	6 December 2016
Germany	\$222 930	8 December 2016
Total contributions received	\$279 625	

Contributions to the Special Fund (1 January–10 December 2017)

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
Czechia	\$9 164.12	15 September 2017
Spain	\$41 273.58	30 October 2017
Total contributions received	\$50 437.70	

Pledges to the Special Fund (1 January–10 December 2017)

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
Germany	\$139 040	6 December 2016
Total contributions received	\$139 040	

IV. Making a contribution

15. Contributions to the Special Fund may be accepted from Governments, intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations, private sector organizations and the

public at large, in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. Only funds earmarked for the Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment will be channelled to the Fund.

16. Contributions to the Special Fund should always be marked "Payee: Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, account CH". Payments may be made either:

(a) By bank transfer in United States dollars, to the UNOG General Fund, account No. 485001802, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, 270 Park Avenue, 43rd floor, New York, NY 10017, United States of America (Swift code: CHAS US 33; bank number: (ABA) 021000021);

(b) By bank transfer in euros, to the United Nations Office at Geneva, account No. 6161600934, J.P. Morgan Chase AG, Grueneburgweg 2 — 60322 Frankfurt am Main, Germany (Swift code: CHAS DE FX, bank number: (BLZ) 50110800, IBAN: DE78 5011 0800 6161 6009 34);

(c) By bank transfer in pounds sterling, to the United Nations Office at Geneva, account No. 23961903, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, 25 London Wall, London EC2Y 5AJ, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Swift code: CHAS GB 2L, bank number: (SC) 609242, IBAN: GB68 CHAS 6092 4223 9619 03);

(d) By bank transfer in Swiss francs, to the United Nations Geneva General Fund, account No. 240-C0590160.0, UBS AG, rue du Rhône 8, case postale 2600, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland (Swift code: UBSW CH ZH 80A; bank number: 240; IBAN: CH92 0024 0240 C059 0160 0);

(e) By bank transfer in other currencies, to the United Nations Geneva General Fund, account No. 240-C0590160.1, UBS AG, rue du Rhône 8, case postale 2600, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland (Swift code: UBSW CH ZH 80A; bank number: 240; IBAN: CH65 0024 0240 C059 0160 1);

(f) Or by cheque, payable to the United Nations, addressed to the Treasury, United Nations, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

17. Donors are requested to inform the Donor and External Relations Section of OHCHR when a payment has been made (including a copy of the bank transfer order or of the cheque) to facilitate effective follow-up to the official recording procedure and the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General.

V. Recommendations

18. The Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is a unique mechanism of torture prevention and the only operational fund established by an international human rights treaty. Its support for national preventive mechanisms, the establishment of which is a core obligation under the Optional Protocol, can be a key tool in torture prevention at the national level.

19. The minimum required on an annual basis to guarantee a functioning Fund would be some \$500,000, which would enable the Fund to support an average of 10 to 20 projects per year, with a reasonable level of funding per project (e.g. \$25,000).

20. The Secretary-General appreciates contributions provided to the Special Fund as well as the Member States' growing interest in the Fund's activities. However, the Special Fund has not yet received sufficient financial contributions during 2017. The Secretary-General therefore calls upon Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities to provide sustained financial support to this important mechanism of torture prevention.

Annex

Special Fund established by the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: projects approved by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Grants Committee since the establishment of the Fund

	<i>State</i>	<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>	<i>Year of project</i>	<i>Grant amount (United States dollars)</i>
1.	Argentina	Legal reform towards the establishment of the state preventive mechanism in Tucuman, and training of judges, penitentiary officers and social workers on the rights of detainees	Abogados y Abogadas del Noroeste Argentino en Derechos Humanos y Estudios Sociales (provincial preventive mechanism)	2015	35 000 00
2.	Argentina	Collecting data regarding violence in contexts of confinement, elaborating a study manual for prison staff, offering training for the penitentiary authorities, carrying out public events to strengthen the local preventive mechanism	Xumek	2018	25 000 00
3.	Armenia	Strengthening of the national preventive mechanism	Penal Reform International	2016	25 000 00
4.	Armenia	Enhancing the capacity of members of the national preventive mechanism via training sessions and equipment, and increasing the awareness of the national preventive mechanism's mandate	Human Rights Defender of Armenia	2018	24 985 00
5.	Benin	Implementation of the Subcommittee recommendations concerning the protection of children deprived of their liberty	World Organization against Torture (non-governmental organization) in partnership with Enfants solidaires d'Afrique et du monde (local non-governmental organization)	2012	19 539 00
6.	Benin	Implementation of the Subcommittee recommendations concerning the protection of children deprived of their liberty	World Organization against Torture (non-governmental organization) in partnership with Enfants solidaires d'Afrique et du monde (local non-governmental organization)	2013	44 428 00
7.	Benin	Informing detainees of their fundamental rights and reducing overpopulation in places of detention through improved identification of cases of arbitrary detention by State actors and civil society	International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (non-governmental organization)	2014	35 000 00

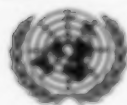
	<i>State</i>	<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>	<i>Year of project</i>	<i>Grant amount (United States dollars)</i>
8	Benin	Improving detention conditions of children deprived of their liberty in penitentiary institutions as well as in police and gendarmerie facilities, and training of juvenile justice judges to be recruited for the newly established child-friendly courts, as provided in the revised Children's Code	World Organization against Torture (non-governmental organization)	2016	15 820.00
9	Brazil	Implementation of the Subcommittee recommendations concerning the protection of children deprived of their liberty in Brazil	World Organization against Torture (non-governmental organization) in partnership with Justiça Global (local non-governmental organization)	2014	34 802.00
10	Brazil	Supporting the Rio de Janeiro preventive mechanism and promoting the establishment of torture preventive mechanisms in other states of Brazil	Justiça Global (in partnership with the Rio de Janeiro preventive mechanism)	2015	35 000.00
11	Brazil	Supporting the work of the Federal Preventive Mechanism and advocating for the establishment of state preventive mechanisms in São Paulo and Maranhão	Associação Direitos Humanos em Rede (Conectas)	2016	25 000.00
12	Brazil	Generating recommendations for the National Justice Council and for the authorities of the São Paulo Public Security Department and the authorities of the Department of Enquiries and the Judiciary Police, organizing a workshop for legal practitioners about torture carried out against women, and their particular vulnerabilities, and preparing an advocacy strategy for the establishment of a local preventive mechanism	Conectas Human Rights	2018	25 000.00
13	Brazil	Building the capacity of the key actors in Brazil, and in particular in the states of Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina: delivering training-of-trainers seminars about the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol), and working with the national preventive mechanism and local preventive mechanisms to develop an advocacy and knowledge-dissemination programme	International Bar Association	2018	24 927.00

<i>State</i>	<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>	<i>Year of project</i>	<i>Grant amount (United States dollars)</i>
14. Brazil	Increasing the understanding and cooperation among preventive mechanisms, law enforcement agencies, and civil society organizations working on juvenile justice, and increasing the visibility of the torture prevention network in Brazil	World Organization against Torture	2018	25 000.00
15. Ecuador	Strengthening the multidisciplinary team for national preventive mechanism visits, and raising awareness of the national preventive mechanism mandate; increasing accessibility of places of deprivation of liberty for national preventive mechanism visits; and ameliorating the visibility of the national preventive mechanism and the dialogue with civil society organizations	Mecanismo Nacional de Prevención de la Tortura, Tratos Crueles, Inhumanos y Degradantes	2018	25 000.00
16. Honduras	Training for prison staff on human rights standards and prevention of torture	Ministry of Justice and Human Rights	2012	20 000.00
17. Honduras	Technical support for the national preventive mechanism in Honduras and training for judges, prosecutors and public defenders	Regional Office for Latin America of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (non-governmental organization) in Panama	2012	14 847.00
18. Honduras	Legal reform and support for the national preventive mechanism in Honduras	Regional Office for Latin America of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (non-governmental organization) in Panama	2013	30 325.00
19. Honduras	Training on the rights and duties of persons deprived of liberty	National Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment (national preventive mechanism)	2014	35 000.00
20. Honduras	Supporting the national preventive mechanism of Honduras in effectively implementing Subcommittee recommendations	Regional Office for Latin America of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (non-governmental organization) in Panama	2015	34 966.65
21. Honduras	Training of judicial officials and students on the Istanbul Protocol	Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y Rehabilitación de la Víctimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares (non-governmental organization)	2015	34 995.05
22. Honduras	Drafting a law for amendments to the existing national preventive mechanism law and lobbying for its adoption, and increasing the technical capacities of national preventive mechanism staff and creating manuals on the monitoring of places of detention	Centro de Prevención, Tratamiento y Rehabilitación de la Víctimas de la Tortura y sus Familiares (non-governmental organization)	2018	25 000.00
23. Kyrgyzstan	Increasing national preventive mechanism capacities in regard to safeguards in the first hours of detention (identifying legislative gaps, lobbying for legal reform) and to monitoring mental health	Association for Prevention of Torture	2018	25 000.00

	State	Project summary	Implementing entity	Year of	Grant amount
				project	(United States dollars)
		institutions			
24	Maldives	Notifying fundamental rights to foreign detainees in their local language	Human Rights Commission of Maldives (national preventive mechanism)	2012	13 200.00
25	Maldives	Supporting the national preventive mechanism of Maldives in implementing the Subcommittee recommendations effectively	Association for the Prevention of Torture (in partnership with the Human Rights Commission of Maldives) (non-governmental organization)	2012	20 000.00
26	Maldives	Supporting the national preventive mechanism of Maldives in implementing the Subcommittee recommendations effectively	Human Rights Commission of Maldives (national preventive mechanism)	2013	15 328.60
27	Maldives	Understanding the risk of violence against Maldivian children deprived of their liberty	Juvenile Justice Unit, Ministry of Home Affairs	2014	23 786.00
28	Maldives	Development and delivery of Istanbul Protocol training on the investigation and documentation of torture and other ill-treatment	Redress Trust (non-governmental organization)	2014	34 876.15
29	Mexico	Providing training on the use of the Istanbul Protocol	Colective contra la Tortura y la Impunidad (non-governmental organization)	2012	19 807.00
30	Mexico	Training for the Mexican judiciary on combating torture, in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, members of the Subcommittee and key national justice institutions	International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (non-governmental organization)	2013	46 855.00
31	Mexico	Training workshop on human rights and the prevention of torture with a gender perspective	Government of Oaxaca	2014	35 000.00
32	Mexico	Supporting the work of the Federal Prosecutor regarding the monitoring and evaluation of medico-legal assessments	Asistencia Legal por los Derechos Humanos (non-governmental organization)	2015	35 000.00
33	Mexico	Strengthening the capacity of criminal court judges to exercise effective judicial control in places of detention, including for torture prevention purposes	Documenta — Análisis y Acción para la Justicia Social, A.C.	2016	24 813.00
34	Mexico	Revising the methodology of the national preventive mechanism's preventive monitoring, with a special focus on the first hours of detention	Association for Prevention of Torture — Panama	2018	24 914.06

			Year of project	Grant amount (United States dollars)
<i>State</i>	<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>		
35. New Zealand	Establishing an evidence base to inform the ongoing discussion on institutional, legislative and behavioural changes regarding the use of seclusion and restraint across places of deprivation of liberty in New Zealand, and contributing to the development of a standardized and consistent approach to seclusion and restraint in order to eliminate de facto discrepancies among the various places of deprivation of liberty in New Zealand	Human Rights Commission	2016	24 775.00
36. New Zealand	Strengthening the capacity of the Office of the Ombudsman to monitor and report the detention conditions of persons with psychosocial disabilities and mental health issues in various places of deprivation of liberty, including penitentiary institutions, mental health institutions and disability places of detention, as well as immigration detention facilities	Office of the Ombudsman	2016	18 699.00
37. Paraguay	Systematization of police records	Ministry of the Interior	2012	19 984.00
38. Paraguay	Design of fair-trial indicators allowing for the monitoring of constitutional guarantees of lawful detention and the presumption of innocence	Supreme Court of Justice	2012	20 000.00
39. Paraguay	Support for the work of the national body in charge of the selection of commissioners for the future national preventive mechanism	Ministry of Justice and Labour	2012	19 500.00
40. Paraguay	Contribution to the development of public policies aimed at the prevention of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment within the purview of the judiciary	Supreme Court of Justice	2013	35 730.00
41. Paraguay	Promoting the fundamental human rights of persons deprived of liberty, and citizen engagement against torture, in Paraguay	Fundacion "Celestina Pérez de Almada"	2014	34 520.00
42. Paraguay	Strengthening of institutional capacities to monitor and investigate torture and ill-treatment by assisting the national preventive mechanism's work, conducting research on root causes of torture and ill-treatment, liaising with relevant stakeholders and facilitating the development of groups of the victims' families	Coordinadora de Derechos Humanos del Paraguay	2016	25 000.00

	<i>State</i>	<i>Project summary</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>	<i>Year of project</i>	<i>Grant amount (United States dollars)</i>
43	Republic of Moldova	Facilitating the resumption of the work of the national preventive mechanism, strengthening its visibility and its influence on the relevant State authorities, and supporting the national preventive mechanism in the discharging of its monitoring and reporting mandate	Institute for Democracy	2016	25 000.00
44	Republic of Moldova	Developing a visibility strategy for the national preventive mechanism for 2018, raising the awareness of national preventive mechanism activities in 2017, and improving the dialogue between the national preventive mechanism members, the Ombudsperson's Office and relevant national entities/institutions to examine effectively the recommendations of the national preventive mechanism and implementation measures	Institute for Penal Reform (national preventive mechanism)	2018	23 270.00
45	Senegal	Supporting the national preventive mechanism of Senegal in implementing Subcommittee recommendations effectively	Observateur National des Lieux de Privation de Liberté (national preventive mechanism)	2015	34 770.90
46	Senegal	Supporting the national preventive mechanism of Senegal in implementing Subcommittee recommendations effectively	Association for the Prevention of Torture (in partnership with the Observateur National des Lieux de Privation de Liberté — the Senegalese national preventive mechanism)	2015	18 937.50
47	Senegal	Increasing the number of national preventive mechanism visits with a focus on persons with mental illness, disability, and HIV/AIDS, and on juveniles; and training of law enforcement officers on treatment of persons deprived of their liberty and raising the public's awareness of the national preventive mechanism (radio programmes in rural areas)	Observateur National des Lieux de Privation de Liberté (national preventive mechanism)	2018	25 000.00
Total grants approved					1 258 400



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Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
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United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, which complements the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session (A/72/276), provides information on the activities of the Fund and describes in particular the recommendations for grants adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Fund at its forty-sixth session, held in Geneva from 30 October to 3 November 2017.



I. Introduction

A. Submission of the report

1. The present report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/146, complements the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the activities of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (A/72/278). It contains updated information on the activities of the Fund, in particular the recommendations adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Fund at its forty-sixth session, held in Geneva from 30 October to 3 November 2017.

B. Mandate of the Fund

2. The Fund receives voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals. In accordance with the mandate of the Fund outlined in General Assembly resolution 36/151 and the practices established by the Board of Trustees since 1982, the Fund provides grants to established channels of assistance, in particular NGOs, associations of victims and of family members of victims, private and public hospitals, legal clinics and public interest law firms that submit project proposals aimed at the provision of medical, psychological, social, financial, legal, humanitarian or other forms of direct assistance to victims of torture and members of their families.

C. Administration of the Fund and composition of the Board of Trustees

3. The Secretary-General administers the Fund through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with the advice of a Board of Trustees composed of five members acting in their personal capacity and appointed by the Secretary-General with due regard to equitable geographical distribution and in consultation with their Governments. On 26 September 2017, the Secretary-General appointed Sara Hossain (Bangladesh), Lawrence Murugu Mute (Kenya) and Vivienne Nathanson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) to replace Anastasia Pinto (India) and Maria Cristina Nunes de Mendonça (Portugal), whose mandates ended on 21 October 2017, and Morad el-Shazly (Egypt), who had resigned earlier in the year. The mandates of Mikołaj Pietrzak (Poland) and the Chair of the Board, Gaby Oré Aguilar (Peru), were renewed.

II. Management of grants

A. Admissibility criteria

4. Project admissibility criteria are outlined in the guidelines of the Fund. The guidelines require a project proposal to be presented by an established channel of assistance, in particular NGOs, associations of victims and of family members of victims, private and public hospitals, legal clinics and public interest law firms. The beneficiaries must be victims of torture and/or their family members. Priority is given to projects providing direct assistance to torture victims, which may consist of medical or psychological assistance, help with social or financial reintegration as well as various forms of legal assistance for victims or members of their families, including support in seeking redress or applying for asylum. As a general rule, projects are supported on a yearly basis for a maximum of 10 years, subject to a satisfactory evaluation of the project and availability of funds.

5. Depending on the availability of funds, the Fund also supports projects seeking to organize training or capacity-building activities for health-care personnel or other service providers, with priority given to applicant organizations that have already received a grant from the Fund. These projects may take the form of training sessions, including peer-to-

peer training, workshops, seminars and conferences or staff exchanges. They are to be conducted primarily for the benefit of the professional staff of the organization applying for support. Grant applications for projects involving investigation, research, studies, publications or other similar activities are not admissible.

6. Outside of the regular grants cycle and subject to availability of funds, the Fund also considers applications for emergency assistance under the emergency intersessional procedure, outlined in the guidelines for the Fund. Emergency grants may be awarded in exceptional circumstances, such as a sudden increase in the number of victims of torture to be assisted as a result of a humanitarian crisis, including armed conflict, war or natural disaster. Emergency grants may also be awarded to enable organizations to resume their activities when such crises result in grave situations (e.g., destruction of their premises or offices) that make it impossible for them to continue providing assistance.

B. Monitoring and evaluation of grants

7. As a rule, pre-screening visits to the applicant organizations are undertaken before a grant is awarded for a new project proposal. Regular visits to monitor ongoing projects for which the renewed support of the Fund is being sought are also conducted to assess the implementation and impact of the projects funded. Internal guidelines on conducting visits to assess projects that have been or are to be funded were developed by the secretariat of the Fund to ensure a consistent evaluation process. Visits to undertake technical evaluations of 68 projects were carried out in 2017, including by the secretariat of the Fund, OHCHR field presences and members of the Board.

III. Financial situation of the Fund

8. The Board, in close coordination with the secretariat of the Fund and the Donor and External Relations Section of OHCHR, seeks to secure a more satisfactory level of contributions from donors, which is needed to respond to the current realities of victims of torture and their family members worldwide. A minimum yearly income of \$12 million would be necessary to respond adequately to the requests for assistance received by the Fund from rehabilitation centres and redress programmes worldwide. In the past three years, the Fund has managed to secure an average yearly income of \$9 million.

9. The table below shows the contributions and pledges received in 2017 (as of 10 December). At the forty-sixth session of the Board, at which grants were recommended for projects to be implemented in 2018, the Fund had a net total of \$8,360,690 available for its 2018 activities, including the award of grants.

Contributions and pledges received from 1 January to 10 December 2017

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
Contributions and pledges		
Austria	16 797	12 June 2017
Canada	43 989	19 April 2017
Chile	5 000	15 March 2017
Czechia	9 164	15 September 2017
Denmark	428 877	24 February 2017
France	21 231	25 April 2017
Germany	447 928	28 June 2017
Germany	202 133	8 December 2017
India	25 000	26 January 2017
Ireland	91 299	11 April 2017

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
Italy	32 017	28 March 2017
Italy	11 848	10 December 2017
Kuwait	10 000	1 April 2017
Liechtenstein	25 100	9 May 2017
Luxembourg	16 688	24 October 2017
Norway	100 876	4 August 2017
Peru	1 482	23 March 2017
Saudi Arabia	75 000	26 May 2017
South Africa	5 536	30 March 2017
Sri Lanka	5 000	19 January 2017
Switzerland	203 252	8 December 2017
United States of America	6 550 000	24 October 2017
Total contributions and pledges	8 336 936	

IV. Forty-sixth session of the Board of Trustees

10. The forty-sixth session of the Board was held in Geneva from 30 October to 3 November 2017. The Board examined applications for funding and made recommendations on grants to be awarded to beneficiary organizations for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018.

11. The amount available for distribution to projects was calculated after deducting programme support costs, the operating cash reserve and the expected expenditure for non-grant activities from the total amount of contributions received since the forty-fourth session of the Board, held in October 2016.

12. At the forty-sixth session, the Board reviewed a total of 218 admissible project proposals aimed at providing direct assistance to victims of torture and their families and — to a lesser extent — training and capacity-building in the field of rehabilitation. Applicants requested a total of \$13,987,691.

13. In line with the grant-making procedure set out at its forty-fifth session (see A/72/278, paras. 5–8), the Board recommended awards for a total of 166 projects in 78 countries. The awards for the recommended projects totalled \$7,221,000, for an average of \$44,000 each. Of the 166 projects, 159 are for the delivery of direct assistance to victims of torture and 7 are for strengthening the capacity of the beneficiary organizations to deliver such services. With the vital financial assistance of the Fund, nearly 40,000 victims and their families worldwide should have access to rehabilitation in the course of 2018.

14. Project proposals were reviewed on a competitive basis, taking into account the merit and documented needs of each proposal, the degree to which it complemented other initiatives and the number of years of continuous support by the Fund to the same project.

15. The Board also recommended setting aside an additional \$300,000 to respond to emergency assistance requests that may be received in 2018 through the intersessional procedure of the Fund.

16. In 2017, thanks to its enhanced emergency procedure, the Fund was able to provide financial support in the amount of \$156,500 for the immediate relief of victims of torture. Grants under the emergency procedure were awarded to support vital rehabilitation services in Argentina, France, Hungary, Italy and the Russian Federation.

17. At its forty-sixth session, the Board also recommended that the secretariat undertake a mapping exercise of grant-making entities that feature prominently in the funding landscape for direct assistance to victims of torture, to be presented at the Board's next policy session, in April 2018. That exercise would make it possible to identify comparative

advantages and complementary priorities, thereby ensuring that the Fund is clearly positioned.

18. In addition, the Board, pursuant to a recommendation made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in 2009, recommended that in 2018 the secretariat produce an updated albeit non-exhaustive compilation of guidance on what practices constitute torture. The aim of the compilation is to help applicants for grants from the Fund understand its mandate more clearly.

19. The Board also held a videoconference with representatives of civil society organizations meeting in Copenhagen within the framework of an initiative to draft a supplement to the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol). The new supplement will contain updated information, clarification and guidance on the implementation of the Istanbul Protocol by States and civil society organizations.

20. Furthermore, the Board also met with the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. The meeting focused on the need to strategically integrate the Fund in the OHCHR Management Plan 2018–2021.

21. In line with its policy on making the Fund a platform for knowledge-sharing in the field of rehabilitation and redress for victims, the Board agreed to the organization of a fourth thematic expert workshop, on access to justice for victims of torture, at its forty-seventh session, to be held in April 2018. As in previous editions, the workshop will gather selected experts and practitioners from organizations that have been awarded grants by the Fund and representatives of United Nations treaty bodies, special procedure mechanisms and United Nations agencies. The proceedings of the previous expert workshop, on torture in the context of migration, are summarized in the report of the Secretary-General on the outcome of the forty-fifth session of the Board (see A/72/278, paras. 9–13).

V. Making a contribution

22. Governments, NGOs and other public and private entities are encouraged to contribute to the Fund. It is important to note that only specifically earmarked contributions are attributed to the Fund. For more information on how to contribute and details about the Fund, donors are requested to contact the secretariat of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; email: unvfvf@ohchr.org; telephone: +41 22 917 9376; fax: +41 22 917 9017.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

23. The contexts and crises in which torture takes place have become more complex in recent years, resulting in an increasing number of victims, including children and adolescents, indigenous people and minorities, human rights defenders, political opponents and journalists, migrants, people with disabilities and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community. The need for redress and rehabilitation is pressing.

24. The Board continues to refine the working methods of the Fund to ensure that the resources available are fairly distributed. The Board, convinced that progress towards the full eradication of torture requires a strengthened United Nations anti-torture front, also seeks to work in close coordination with the other mechanisms set up by the United Nations to combat torture.

25. Many States continue to neglect their obligation to prevent torture and fail to provide torture victims with effective and prompt redress, compensation and appropriate forms of rehabilitation. The Fund has been a lifeline of last resort for thousands of unattended victims worldwide.

26. The Board holds the view that there is a need to facilitate knowledge-sharing among rehabilitation practitioners and that the Fund should serve as a platform for exchanging and collecting expertise in this field by holding annual thematic workshops. The next such workshop, which will focus on access to justice for torture victims, will be held in Geneva in April 2018.

27. The Secretary-General appeals to Member States and other stakeholders to contribute to the Fund, noting that even small contributions are a concrete manifestation of the commitment of States to the elimination of torture, in line with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, article 14 in particular. The Fund would need an annual income of \$12 million (as opposed to its current annual income of slightly more than \$8 million) to respond adequately to the numerous requests for assistance it receives.
